



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

To work with ORS assuring that all Rhode Islanders with disabilities are able to obtain and keep meaningful and satisfying employment.

Full Council Minutes October 16, 2012

4:00 P.M. – 6:00 P.M.

Department of Labor and Training ~ 1151 Pontiac Avenue ~ Cranston, RI 02920

Present from Council: Dr. Kate McCarthy-Barnett, Bryant Berganza, Christine Botts, Rocco Bruno, Stephen Brunero, Wheeler Clemmons, Lea Colardo, Cynthia Cote, Dr. Mona Dorsinville-Phanor, Laurie DiOrio, Linda Deschenes, Joan Fino, Liz Graves, Roberta Greene-Whittemore, Kathleen Grygiel, Maryellen Hagerty, Paul Harden, Margaret Hoye, Diana Kriner, Anne LeClerc, JoAnn Nannig, Dan Pieroni, Catherine Sansonetti, Jane Slade, Juan Troncoso, Willa Truelove, Kim Wennermark

1. **Call to Order** - Dr. Kate McCarthy-Barnett called the meeting to order at 4 P.M. Quorum met.
2. **Additions/Deletions to Agenda** - None.
3. **Approval of Minutes** - Motion to accept the May 8, 2012 meeting minutes was unanimously approved.
4. **ORS Report** - Steve Brunero Reports:

* Pointed out the ten action items at the May meeting for review. (See May 8, 2012 minutes)

* RI Department of Labor and Training (DLT) will receive a grant of \$3.3 million from the U.S. Labor Department as part of \$20.7 million in Disability Employment Initiative funding nationwide. Rhode Island is one of seven states receiving the grant meant to fund education, training and employment projects for those with disabilities who are unemployed, underemployed or receiving Social Security disability benefits. ORS will be partnering with DLT on this initiative.

* ORS will be updating the Cooperative Agreement with the Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals (BHDDH) to include more recovery issues.

* Disability Employment Initiative to improve education, training and employment outcomes for youth and adults with disabilities sponsored by the Rehabilitation Service Administration (RSA) in conjunction with RIDLT.

* 107 Monitoring Visit - Kathleen Grygiel has a detailed briefing to give but in general, there were three core elements of monitoring visit, the first reviewed Organizational Structure meeting with Director Powell and myself to see where ORS fits in the Department of Human Services, which was fine. They looked at our positions on the Workforce Investment Boards, which also were fine. The second core of the monitoring was Fiscal Integrity, reviewing how our federal dollars are being utilized. They made some recommendations for improvement in this area. The third area for review was Transition Services; speaking with stakeholders and assessing some changes in our contracts. Overall, it was a very favorable review. The review is on the RSA website. Nancy will send this report out.

* Training - ORS just held a training event for ORS staff on Individual Plan for Employment (IPE), and we have an upcoming yearly strategic planning event this coming week.

* Employer Honor Role – It is important for all SRC members to attend and invite employers.

* Return on Investments – Some of the VR programs nationally are not doing well in that, almost \$140 million was turned back to the Federal Government (RSA) this year because states could not come up with the state match to get the federal dollars. When this happens the RSA comes back to the states that did make the match, like RI, and reallocates the money. RI was able to capture an additional \$2.5 million for this fiscal year.

* Freezes on Federal Hiring - Disability Determination Unit still cannot hire.

5. 107 Monitoring - Kathleen Grygiel Reports:

Three topic areas for review, Organizational Structure Requirements, Transition Services and Employment Outcomes for youth, and Fiscal Integrity of VR Program.

- Development of IPE - ORS is not in compliance with meeting its 90-day time standard for the development of IPE's following the determination of eligibility.

Action Plan - One of the things we were doing was over planning for our clients before writing the IPE. RSA suggested we use the IPE as exploratory tool. We are implementing staff training to focus on timeliness in eligibility determination and plan development. We are planning to develop an internal quality assurance committee. We will monitor our compliance with the 60 day eligibility determinations and the 90 days for IPEs. There will be supervisory and staff workshops on more efficient use of MIS system.

- Interagency Agreements with the RI Department of Elementary Education (RIDE). Our agreement with RIDE does not describe outreach procedures to identify students with disabilities needing transition services who are not receiving special education services.

Action Plan - Amendment being developed between ORS and RIDE to include outreach plans for non-IPE students.

- Program Income Distribution - ORS must disburse all program income prior to requesting additional federal VR funds.

- Third-Party Cooperative Agreement - Between ORS and RIDE is not in compliance with VR program regulations governing these agreements because it is not properly structured for the purpose of obtaining the non-federal share of expenditures associated with the programming.

Action Plan - RIDE has fully executed an Interagency Transfer. And RIDE and ORS will be developing a schedule for reporting deliverables and expenditures.

- Contract Monitoring - ORS is required to monitor and manage the operations of all VR program grant-supported activities. ORS as well as its contractors, is required to implement fiscal controls to ensure that VR funds are expended and accounted for accurately and that expenditures are traceable to a level sufficient to determine that such expenditures were made in accordance with applicable federal requirements.

Action Plan - ORS is developing a monitoring structure for contracted programs under the RIDE & ORS agreement.

6. Chair's Report - Dr. Kate McCarthy-Barnett Reports:

* Realignment of the focus of our subcommittees - We are reviewing the State Plan findings to determine goals for our Council and make sure we stay on task and on target with those goals. Reexamine those ten action items from the May meeting to keep us focused. We will work to have a more open dialogue on what the subcommittees are working on; keeping membership up to date of subcommittee meetings and inviting all members to those meetings.

* We want to look at issues and gaps in ORS services and formalize our process when we are working in the subcommittees to address them. We want to have things done and bulleted before we come to the full Council meetings so we can review it and come into the meetings with fully informed members.

* We are looking at other states to see what priorities the other Councils are working on and how this could assist us moving forward.

7. Subcommittee Reports

- Nomination and Leadership Development Committee - Rocco Bruno Reports:

Cynthia Cote will Chair but we must have another co-chair. Recruitment is our primary goal right now.

* R. Bruno motioned for the re-appointment of the following members seconded by M. Hoyer and unanimously approved. Kelley Conti, Cynthia Cote, Wheeler Clemons, Jane Slade, Catherine Sansonetti

* R. Bruno motioned for the appointment of the following members seconded by M. Hoyer and unanimously approved. Lea Colardo, Dominic DiOrio, Elizabeth Graves, Maryellen Hagerty,

* The committee presented its Slate of Officers to be voted on at the December meeting.

Chair - Dr. Kate McCarthy-Barnett, Vice-Chair - Jeffrey D. Machado, Secretary - Catherine Sansonetti

- State Plan, Policy & Quality Assurance - Catherine Sansonetti Reports:

Catherine Sansonetti and Dr. Kate McCarthy-Barnett will Co-chair.

* More Feedback - Other Council members are welcome to sit in on our meetings. We want more feedback from the Council.

* Look to meet with ORS reps as a subcommittee to review the kinds of data they (ORS) are collecting so we can monitor how it is going for the Agency and analyze results.

- Transition - Jane Slade Reports:

Jane Slade and Lea Colardo will Co-chair.

* Overall awareness about Transition, pull some events together happening around the state and put them in one spot.

* Review the findings from RSA visit to assist the subcommittee generate outreach strategies for 504 students.

* Look at the hotspots for barriers for youth in Transition and strategize against top three barriers.

- Marketing and Outreach - Roberta Greene- Whittemore:

Jeffrey D. Machado and Juan Troncoso will Co-chair.

* We need to get the ORS message out to employer community, providers, referrals folks, and customer base.

* We would like to piggyback on other committees when opportunities arise for outreach. ORS has a marketing committee using a marketing tool and we will review this as a subcommittee.

* How to reach out to under representative groups, going to the source where people feel comfortable, like church affiliated groups. Juan will work on setting up a meeting for the subcommittee.

8. Public Comments - None

9. Adjournment - The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nancy L. Baker

Nancy L. Baker, SRC Facilitator